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Bridgwater Rural District Council.

THE FORTY-THIRD

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

(Wilberforce Thompson),

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. LOND.

AND

THE INSPECTOR OF NUISANCES

(W. Horace Cousins),

for the Year 1925.

Bridgwater Rural District Council.



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BRIDGWATER :

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Medical Officer's Report

FOR THE YEAR 1925.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BRIDGWATER RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I beg to submit my report for the year 1925.

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (acres) 85,076.

Population, Census 1921, 17,465. Estimated 1925, 17,630.

Number of Inhabited Houses (1921) 4,624.

Number of Families or Separate Occupiers (1921) 4,471.

Rateable Value, £199,527.

Sum represented by a 1d. Rate, £832 12s. 3d.

Assessable Value, £138,521.

Sum represented by a 1d. Rate, £577 3s. 5d.

Amount of Poor Law Relief, £2,598.

The District is divided into a Western Division and an Eastern Division by the River Parrett. The Western Division slopes from the Quantock Hills to the River Parrett, the character of the soil being red sandstone and clay marl. The Eastern Division is to a great extent level country, the character of the soil being clay land and marsh land, except the portion formed by the Polden Hills, which is blue lias.

The chief occupation of the inhabitants is agriculture, grazing and dairy farming being carried on to a large extent, especially in the Eastern Division. Other trades include brick and tile making, manufacture of Portland cement, preparation and canning of condensed milk, cultivation of withies, basket and wicker chair making, cutting and preparation of peat. There are no trades which have an injurious effect on the public health.

BIRTH-RATE, DEATH-RATE, AND ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1925.

(Provisional figures. The rates for England and Wales have been calculated on a population estimated to the middle of 1925, while those for the towns have been calculated on populations estimated to the middle of 1924. The mortality rates refer to the whole population as regards England and Wales, but only to civilians as regards London and the groups of towns.)

	BIRTH-RATE PER 1,000 TOTAL POPULA- TION.	ANNUAL DEATH-RATE PER 1,000 POPULATION.										RATE PER 1,000 BIRTHS.		PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL DEATHS	
		All Causes.	Enteric Fever.	Small-pox.	Measles.	Scarlet Fever.	Whooping Cough.	Diphtheria.	Influenza.	Violence.	Diarrhoea and Enteritis (under Two years).	Total Deaths under One year.	(Causes of Death certified by Registered Medical Practitioners.	Inquest Cases.	Uncertified Causes of Death.
England and Wales ...	18.3	12.2	0.01	0.00	0.13	0.03	0.15	0.07	0.32	0.47	8.4	75	92.1	6.9	1.0
105 County Boroughs and Great Towns, including London.	18.8	12.2	0.01	0.00	0.17	0.03	0.18	0.09	0.30	0.43	10.8	79	92.1	7.3	0.6
157 Smaller Towns (1921 Adjusted Populations 20,000- 50,000).	18.3	11.2	0.01	0.00	0.15	0.02	0.14	0.06	0.31	0.38	7.6	74	93.0	5.9	1.1
London	18.0	11.7	0.01	0.00	0.08	0.02	0.19	0.11	0.23	0.46	10.6	67	91.1	8.9	0.0
Bridgwater Rural District.	18.7	9.8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.22	0.00	0.44	0.51	6.0	63	92.7	7.2	0.0

VITAL STATISTICS.

		Total.	M.	F.		
Births	{ Legitimate Illegitimate	321 8	159 0	162 8	} Birth Rate	18·72
Deaths	...	235	114	121	Death Rate	13·33
Number of Women Dying in or in consequence of Child Birth		{ From Sepsis ,, other causes		... 0	0	
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 births.						
Legitimate, 63·83.		Illegitimate, 0.		Total	63·83	
Deaths from Measles (all ages) ...		..		...	0	
,, ,, Whooping Cough (all ages)		..		..	4	
,, ,, Diarrhoea (under 2 years)		...		...	2	

Influenza and Whooping Cough were responsible for a considerable amount of sickness, especially during the first part of the year. There were no conditions of occupation or environment which appear to have had any prejudicial effect on health.

Causes of Death in Bridgwater Rural District.

Registrar General's Figures.

CAUSES OF DEATH.					1925	
					Males.	Females.
Civilians only—						
ALL CAUSES	...	...	...	...	114	121
1	Enteric Fever	...	...	...
2	Small-pox	...	...	...
3	Measles	...	...	...
4	Scarlet Fever	...	...	...
5	Whooping Cough	...	...	...	1	3
6	Diphtheria	...	...	...
7	Influenza	...	...	...	4	4
8	Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...	...		1
9	Meningococcal Meningitis	...	...	...
10	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	...	5	9
11	Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	1	1
12	Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	...	13	17
13	Rheumatic Fever	...	...	...
14	Diabetes	...	...	...
15	Cerebral Hæmorrhage, etc.	...	...	...	9	10
16	Heart Disease	...	...	...	14	13
17	Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	...	1	1
18	Bronchitis	...	...	...	11	7
19	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	...	5	1
20	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	2	2
21	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...		1
22	Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	...	...	...	2	
23	Appendicitis and Typhlitis	...	...	...	1	1
24	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	...	2	
25	Acute and Chronic Nephritis	...	...	...	3	1
26	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...
27	Other Accidents and Diseases of Pregnancy and Parturition	...	...	...
28	Congenital Debility and Malformation, Premature Birth	...	...	...	7	2
29	Suicide	...	...	...	2	
30	Other Deaths from Violence	...	...	...	5	2
31	Other defined Diseases	...	...	...	26	41
32	Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...	...		1
Special causes (included above)—						
	Poliomyelitis	...	...	...
	Polioencephalitis	...	...	...
Deaths of Infants { Total					15	6
under 1 year { Illegitimate						
TOTAL BIRTHS					159	170
Legitimate					159	162
Illegitimate						8
POPULATION					17,630	

Infantile Mortality during the Year 1925.

Deaths from stated Causes and various Ages under 1 Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.				Under 1 week.	1 to 2 Weeks.	2 to 3 Weeks.	3 to 4 Weeks.	Total	Under 1 Month.	1 to 3 Months.	3 to 6 Months.	6 to 9 Months.	9 to 12 Months.	Total Deaths Under One Year.
Premature Birth	...	...	...	6				6						6
Congenital Defects	...	...	...	1	1			2	1					3
Bronchitis	...	...	...						1	1				2
Pneumonia	...	...	...				1	1				1		2
Diarrhoea	...	...	...						1					1
Influenza	...	...	...						1					1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...				1	1				1	1	3
Other causes	...	...	...	2				2				1		3
Total				9	1		2	12	4	1	2	2		21

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

There are no Hospitals provided or subsidised by the Local Authority.

(1) Tuberculosis. The Quantock Lodge Sanatorium at Over Stowey, provided by the County Council, was opened during June, 1925. This has accommodation for 63 patients.

(2) Maternity. None.

(3) Children. None.

(4) Fever. None.

(5) Small pox. During the year 1923 the County Council built a Small-pox Hospital near Cossington, consisting of two wards with beds for eight patients; there is also a house for caretaker in which the nurse's quarters are situated.

There is no Institutional provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the area.

Ambulance Facilities. (a) For Infectious Cases. None.

(b) For Non-Infectious Cases and Accidents. There is a motor ambulance at Bridgwater in connection with the St. John's Ambulance Association which is available for the District on payment of a small fee.

Clinics and Treatment Centres. Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, Day Nurseries, School Clinics. None.

A Tuberculosis and Venereal Disease Dispensary is situated in Bridgwater, provided by the Somerset County Council, and is available for patients living in the Bridgwater Rural District.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority. One Medical Officer of Health, holding Diploma of D.P.H., London, part time.

One Sanitary Inspector, Certified Inspector Royal Sanitary Institute, Professional Associate of Surveyors' Institute, Member of Municipal and County Engineers, whole time.

One Assistant Sanitary Inspector, Certified Inspector Royal Sanitary Institute, Certificated Inspector of Meat and other Foods.

Half salary of Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspector repaid by the County Council.

Professional Nursing in the Home. (a) General. No arrangements have been made by the Local Authority for General Nursing in the home.

(b) For Infectious Cases. When in the opinion of the M.O.H. it is necessary, owing to the financial position of the patient and the severity of the illness, the Local Authority provides trained nurses, the expense being borne by the Local Authority.

No private Association or Voluntary Workers are available.

Midwives. None employed by the Local Authority.

Legislation in Force. List of Adoptive Acts, Bye-laws, &c., made by the Local Authority and approved by the Local Govern-

ment Board under date April 3rd, 1900, including certain Urban powers vested in the Local Authority, viz:—

Clearance of Footways, Removal of Refuse, &c.
 Prevention of Nuisances.
 Common Lodging Houses.
 Houses let in Lodgings.
 New Streets and Buildings.
 Slaughter Houses.
 Cemeteries.
 Offensive Trades.

And Powers conferred on the Council by order of the Local Government Board.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water. The water supply of the District is from:—

1. Willoughby (Broomfield).
2. The Bridgwater Town Council.
3. Nether Stowey.
4. Privately owned parish schemes.
5. Wells and springs.

The water supply from Willoughby, in the parish of Broomfield, provided and owned by the Bridgwater Rural District Council, continues to provide a splendidly pure supply to the following parishes:—Bawdrip, Bridgwater Without (part parish), Chedzoy, Chilton Trinity (part parish), Cossington, Huntspill, Middlezoy, North Petherton, Othery, Pawlett, Puriton, St. Michael Church, Westonzoyland, Woolavington and Lyng.

The gathering area is unknown and undefined, the water being obtained from deep-seated springs, which are tapped by means of collecting trenches, and the water conveyed to a small concrete covered service reservoir (60,000 gals.) by lines of pipes, thereby obviating any possibility of contamination.

No purification process is used, and the water is supplied entirely by gravitation.

Extensions have been made for the purpose of supplying the whole of the Parishes of Westonzoyland and Lyng, and parts of the parishes of Chedzoy, North Petherton, Pawlett, Othery and Middlezoy.

During 1923 and 1924 a borehole 400 ft. deep was sunk on the Willoughby Estate and permanent pumping plant installed as an auxiliary in case of drought periods or heavy draw-offs. This has proved very satisfactory.

Number of houses supplied in various parishes as follows:—

		Houses by Rate.	Meter Rate.	Total.
Bawdrip	...	67	26	93
Chedzoy	...	60	16	76
Huntspill	...	251	86	337
North Petherton	...	523	126	649
Pawlett	...	86	22	108
Puriton	...	130	29	159
Middlezoy	...	67	61	128
Othery	...	71	43	114
Westonzoyland	...	66	40	106
Bridgwater Without		50	25	75
Cossington	...	36	14	50
Woolavington	...	51	25	76
Lyng	...	45	32	77
Chilton Trinity	...	9	...	9
Chilton Polden	...	10	4	14
St. Michael Church		3	3	6

Bridgwater Waterworks, provided and owned by the Bridgwater Town Council. The water is obtained from springs and open streams in the parish of Over Stowey, in the Quantock Hills. Geological features: middle and lower Devonian. The water flows in open streams through uncultivated forest land and cultivated lands, with adjacent buildings, to the pumping station at Ashford,

where it is subjected to filtration through sand filter beds. From there it is pumped to a reservoir at the top of Wembdon Hill, and distributed from that point by gravitation. At the pumping station there are two horizontal pumps, with auxiliary turbine, working seven days a week.

A covered service reservoir is situated at Wembdon, holding 600,000 gals., constructed of brickwork.

The supply is quite sufficient. Purification processes used: one settling tank and two filter beds. Parishes supplied with this water:—

Cannington.

Bridgwater Without (part parish).

Wembdon (part parish).

Durleigh (part parish).

Nether Stowey Water Supply, provided and owned by the Bridgwater Rural District Council, is situated at Nether Stowey, in the Quantock Hills. Geological features: middle and lower Devonian. The water is derived from springs and is supplied by gravitation. There is a small service reservoir, holding some 8,000 gals., constructed of concrete, with closed top.

This water is supplied to the village of Nether Stowey, population 578, and part of adjoining parish of Over Stowey.

Privately Owned Parish Schemes. In the parish of Thurloxtton some 24 houses are supplied from mains laid on the Lord Portman Estate.

Most of the parish of Goathurst is supplied from mains laid on the Lord Wharton Estate.

The remaining parishes in the Rural District are dependent for their water supply on wells and springs.

Rivers and Streams. Only one case has occurred of river or stream pollution in this District and that, in the River Brue at Basonbridge, pollution by effluent from large milk and dairy

factory owned by the Wilts United Dairy Co. This was dealt with directly by the County Council, and the Dairy Co. have since installed large purification plant for dealing with the effluent before discharging into the river.

Drainage and Sewerage. This on the whole is satisfactory. Various methods are in operation for dealing with the sewage of the area.

At Wembdon, a large residential parish adjoining Bridgwater, a scheme has been working satisfactorily for several years whereby the sewage is ejected by compressed air ejectors directly into the tidal River Parrett, the necessary gas engines, ejector stations and plant having been installed for the purpose.

At North Petherton, the largest village in the District, the sewage, after receiving the usual tank treatment, is filtered over properly constructed filter beds with revolving sprinklers.

Tank and filter bed treatment is also in operation at Weston-zoyland, and in various other parishes settling tanks, which are emptied as required, are in operation.

Several new lengths of sewers have been laid.

Closet Accommodation. Water closets are gradually superseding the old privy type in those parishes which have a public supply of water; in others the privy midden is being replaced with earth pail closets.

Scavenging. House refuse is disposed of by the occupier, no public scavenging being in vogue.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area. See Sanitary Inspector's report, page 21.

Premises and Occupations which can be controlled by Bye-laws or Regulations. Only one offensive trade, that of a knacker's yard, is carried on in a very secluded spot in the parish of Puriton, and controlled by Bye-laws in force within the District.

Schools. The sanitary conditions and water supply to schools is generally satisfactory.

HOUSING.

General. The majority of the houses in the District are in fair condition, and there is, particularly in the villages surrounding the town of Bridgwater, a shortage of houses, but this cannot be described as acute.

The building of new houses by private enterprise has progressed steadily; in addition the Council has schemes in operation in the parishes of North Petherton, Puriton, Middlezoy and East Huntspill, and the erection of further houses is contemplated in the majority of the parishes.

No important change in the population is anticipated in the near future.

Overcrowding. A few cases have occurred of overcrowding, and these have been due generally to the size of the family and the inability of the parents to rent a house most suitable to their requirements.

It is anticipated that the Council's proposed scheme will assist to remove this difficulty.

Three cases of acute overcrowding were enquired into, two of which were due to taking in lodgers; these were compelled to find other accommodation. The other case, that of a large family occupying one room, succeeded after continuous pressure in renting a cottage.

Fitness of Houses. The general standard of housing in the District is satisfactory, the main defects in unfit houses being due to dilapidations owing to age, and neglect on the part of owners to exercise proper supervision and carry out repairs when necessary.

Notices have been served under the Public Health Acts, no drastic action having been taken under the Housing Acts pending provision of more new houses under the housing scheme.

Great difficulty is experienced by tenants in finding suitable alternative accommodation so as to permit of closing orders being served, where necessary, on those owners who neglect to maintain their cottages in a reasonable habitable state.

Water supply, closet accommodation and refuse disposal do not affect housing.

Unhealthy Areas. There are no unhealthy areas in the District. Bye-laws as to Common Lodging Houses and Houses let in Lodgings are in force within the District, and no difficulty has been experienced in connection with these.

General and Miscellaneous. No action taken, the need for such not having been found necessary.

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1925.

Number of New Houses erected during the year.

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b)	-	36
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts		
(1) By the Local Authority	- - -	0
(2) By other bodies of persons	- - -	26

1. — *Unfit Dwelling-houses.*

(1) Inspection—Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	- - - - -	67
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910, or the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	- - - - -	30
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	- - - - -	1
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	- - - - -	36

2.—*Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	-	-	-	-	49
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3.—*Action under Statutory Powers.*

A.—Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	-	-	0
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices .			
(a) By owners	-	-	0
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	-		0
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close	-		0

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied		3
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices		
(a) By owners	-	3
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	-	0

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11, 14 and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925.

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	-	-	1
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	-	-	1
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit			0

(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made - - -	0
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders - - -	0

Milk Supply. The district being situated in a milk producing county has an adequate supply and a big trade is carried on by exporting to larger towns. Cheese and butter making is also extensively practised. The cowsheds and dairies are kept reasonably clean, but some of the premises of small holders require reconstruction, the carrying out of which is unfortunately in the majority of cases nearly impossible owing to economic conditions.

Greater attention has been paid to cowsheds and dairies during the past few years, and with the added interest which the farmer is taking in production, will it is anticipated provide a much more wholesome food.

(1) No action taken by the Local Authority as to tuberculous milk, and the administration of the Tuberculosis Order respecting cattle is in the hands of the County Police. In cases where tuberculosis in milking cows is suspected notification is sent to the Authority concerned.

(2) No licences granted for the sale of milk under special designations classified as in the Fourth Schedule to the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1923.

(3) No refusals or revocation of registration of retailers or of licences for graded milk.

(4) No samples taken for bacteriological examination of graded or other milk.

Meat. Meat inspection is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector, and so far as is possible inspection is made at the time of slaughter.

No marking of meat is undertaken.

(1) Condemnation of meat was due chiefly to Tuberculosis, a few cases of Actinomycosis of the head being recorded in oxen. Distoma Hepaticum of the liver was very prevalent during the year in oxen and sheep. Removal was undertaken when whole carcasses were condemned, which were buried in quick lime, no systematic removal being in operation when organs only were seized, these being disposed of on the premises under the supervision of the Inspector.

(2) Adequate attention was paid by butchers owning shops against contamination, the majority of the trade being carried on from vehicles, and in only one case was it found necessary to request the butcher to provide proper covering during transit.

(3) All slaughter-houses in the District are privately managed.

Slaughter-houses in the District.

		In 1920.		In Jan. 1925.		In Dec. 1925.
Registered	...	—	...	11	...	7
Licenced	...	20		13	...	12
		—		—		—
Total	...	20 (a)		24	...	19
		—		—		—

(a) Taken from 1920 report.

Other Foods. Bakehouses are kept in a fairly clean condition and on the whole are satisfactory, more steam ovens being installed thus minimising dirty premises. Only one big factory exists which is of modern construction, owned by the Wilts United Dairies Limited and used for the manufacture of condensed milk. The premises are in every way satisfactory.

The inspection and seizure of food is carried out under powers conveyed by Sections 116—119 of the Public Health Act 1875, considerable advantages would be gained by adopting the wider powers granted in Section 28 of the Public Health (Amendment) Act 1890.

No cases of Food Poisoning have occurred.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

During the period since 1920 there has been no noteworthy outbreak of notifiable disease. As there is no isolation hospital in the district these cases are with very few exceptions treated at home, and it is unusual in Scarlet fever to find that any other members of the family contract the disease. This cannot be said of Diphtheria which seems much more difficult to limit to the first one attacked.

Diphtheria Antitoxin and other sera are supplied free of cost by the Local Authority.

With regard to the diseases notifiable under the Regulations of January 7th, 1919. Only one case of Malaria, and that a person who had just returned from India was reported. No cases of Dysentery or Trench fever have occurred.

The examination of bacteriological specimens is carried out at the Somerset County Council Public Health Laboratories at Weston-super-Mare. Constant use is made of the facilities offered by this laboratory and the work done by it is of very great value. As the district is without an isolation hospital, isolation has to be carried out in the home as far as possible under the supervision of the M.O.H. and Sanitary Inspector, and as a rule the results are good. Disinfection is also carried out in the home by spraying and fumigation.

No use has been made of the Schick and Dick tests in Diphtheria and Scarlet fever, and no artificial methods of immunization against these diseases have been used. No primary Vaccinations or Re-vaccinations have been performed by the Medical Officer of Health.

During the year 1924 the non-notifiable infectious diseases, Mumps, Measles, Whooping Cough, Chicken-pox and Influenza were very prevalent and caused a large amount of sickness amongst the School Children. Whooping Cough was also prevalent during the first half of 1925, and four deaths were due to this disease.

The deaths from Influenza during the past five years are as follows :—
1921—4, 1922—6, 1923—2, 1924—11, 1925—8. No special action
has been taken in the area with regard to it.

There are no facilities in the area for disinfection of Verminous
persons and their belongings. Disinfection of premises and articles which
have been exposed to infection is carried out by fumigation and spraying.

Notifiable Diseases other than Tuberculosis during the Year 1925.

DISEASE.	Total Cases notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Died.
Scarlet Fever	28	1	
Diphtheria	13		
Pneumonia	9		9
Erysipelas	2		
Puerperal Fever..	1		
Ophthalmic Neonatorum... ..	1		
Encephalitis Lethargica	3		1
	57	1	10

*Analysis of the Total Cases of Notifiable Disease and Deaths
under the following Age Groups.*

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Year.	1—2 years.	2—3 years.	3—4 years.	4—5 years.	5—10 years.	10—15 years.	15—20 years.	20—35 years.	35—45 years.	45—65 years.	65 and over.
Scarlet Fever	2	1	1	4	13	4	1	1		1		
Deaths												
Diphtheria		1	1	2	1	4		2		1	1	
Deaths												
Pneumonia							1	1	6	1		
Deaths	2					1	1	1	1	2	1	
Erysipelas	1											1
Deaths												
Puerperal Fever									1			
Deaths												
Ophthalmic Neonatorum	1											
Deaths												
Encephalitis Lethargica								1	2			
Deaths									1			

Tuberculosis—New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

AGE PERIODS.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year			1				1	
1-5 years	1	1						
5-10 years	1	1						
10-15 years	1	1				2		
15-20 years	1	5				2		1
20-25 years					1	2		
25-35 years	3	2				2		
35-45 years	5	2			2			
45-55 years		1			1	1		
55-65 years	1				1			
65 and upwards		1						
	13	14	1		5	9	1	1

OPHTHALMIA NEONATORUM.	CASES.			Vision Unimpaired.	Vision Impaired.	Total Blindness.	Deaths.
	Notified.	Treated.					
		At Home.	In Hospital.				
	1	1		1			

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925.

No action has been necessary under the above regulations.

Maternity and Child Welfare. Cases of Puerperal fever are visited by the M.O.H. and the Nurse or Mid-wife is suspended. Cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum are also visited and the infant kept under observation for several months. Nurses are provided by the Local Authority so that constant treatment may be carried out.

Your obedient Servant,

WILBERFORCE THOMPSON.

Sanitary Inspector's Report

FOR THE YEAR 1925.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE BRIDGWATER RURAL
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my report for the year 1925.

Numerous complaints have been received during the year and dealt with as satisfactorily as possible, but in a number of cases, particularly those concerning very dilapidated houses, the owners have been somewhat slow in complying with repeated requests to carry out repairs and it will be necessary for more drastic action to be taken in the future.

Difficulties exist in the proper administration of the Housing Acts due to the shortage of dwelling-houses suitable to the class of people mostly affected.

Slaughter Houses. Greater powers have been given Local Authorities this year for the control of these premises and inspection of animals killed, by the operation of the Rural District Council's (Slaughterhouses) Order, 1924, and the Public Health (Meat) Regulations, 1924. The Council having obtained Urban powers previously the former Act did not apply to any great extent, only one licence of a definite period having been applied for and granted. Four premises which had ceased to be used as slaughterhouses were struck off the Register, leaving twenty in use which have been kept in a very clean condition, but some, owing to structural defects, cannot be considered satisfactory.

The small slaughterhouse in the Parish of Westonzoyland ceased to be used and the licence was withdrawn on the 9th December, 1925.

The Public Health (Meat) Regulations added greatly to the duties of the office, and although it was impossible to inspect all animals killed, numerous inspections were made. No systematic removal and destruction of diseased meat was undertaken, but in areas where whole carcasses were condemned this was done by collecting in the Council's lorry and

burying in quicklime at the Council's depot. It may be advisable and desirable to consider some means of collecting and destroying diseased organs, etc.

Bakehouses. Marked improvement has been observed in the cleanliness of these premises, and only in a few cases has it been necessary to draw the occupiers' attention to small matters.

Cowsheds and Dairies. Some progress has been made during the year to improve the conditions. Small holders, with very unsuitable premises, and limited capital to improve same, constitute the greater proportion of persons carrying on the trade of milk producers in the District. It is pleasing to report, however, that the general standard of cleanliness is slightly higher; alterations and improvements to premises are mostly required to comply with the Orders, and to assist the producer to provide cleaner and more wholesome milk.

Water Supply. The pumping plant and machinery was installed for raising water from the bore-hole on the Willoughby Estate, and proved of inestimable service during the dry period this year. No serious complaints of shortage were received, but it was found necessary to work the plant day and night for a period.

Samples were taken of all the public supplies of water in the District for chemical and bacteriological analysis, and proved satisfactory.

Sewerage and Drainage. Small improvements were made in various Parishes by taking up and relaying portions of defective sewers with glazed socketed pipes.

Factories and Workshops. All are in fairly satisfactory condition, and the provision of more closet accommodation is in hand.

Sanitary Matters and Nuisances dealt with during the Year.

No of inspections and re-inspections of houses and premises	...	1,401
Defective drainage	...	35
Defective sewers	...	28
Insanitary privies and earth closets	...	28
Defective W.C.'s	...	5
New W.C.'s provided	...	2
New E.C.'s provided	...	1

Nuisances from cesspits ...	...	...	...	18
Offensive accumulations ...	...	...	...	13
Animals kept so as to be a nuisance ...	...	...	...	3
Premises kept so as to be a nuisance ...	...	...	...	2
Overcrowding of cottages ...	...	...	...	3
Rooms which required cleansing ...	...	...	...	73
Samples of water taken for analysis ...	...	...	...	80
Foul ditches... ..	...	...	...	12
No water supply ...	...	...	...	4
Number of houses not reasonably fit ...	...	...	...	67
(a) Dilapidated roofs ...	...	...	...	17
(b) „ walls ...	...	...	...	6
(c) Defective windows ...	...	...	...	25
(d) „ floors ...	...	...	...	26
(e) Dampness to rooms ...	...	...	...	32
(f) Plastering to ceilings and walls defective ...	...	...	...	43
(g) Dangerous staircases ...	...	...	...	5
(h) No eaves gutters ...	...	...	...	13
Drains tested ...	...	...	...	46
Rooms and shelters sprayed or fumigated after infectious disease				57
School sprayed and fumigated ...	...	...	...	1
Number of notices served (preliminary) ...	...	...	...	219
„ „ „ „ (statutory) ...	...	...	...	2
Proceedings taken ...	...	...	...	0

Inspection of Factories, Workshops and Workplaces.

Factories ...	...	...	...	14
Workshops ...	...	...	...	63
Workplaces ...	...	...	...	7
Written notices--factories ...	...	...	...	6
„ „ workshops ...	...	...	...	22
„ „ workplaces ...	...	...	...	0

Defects found in Factories and Workshops.

	Found.	Remedied.	Ref. to H.M.I.
Want of cleanliness ...	17	17	0
Want of proper sanitary accommodation	11	11	0
Want of ventilation ...	2	1	0

Factories.

Number of factories in the district	...	...	...	23
Brick, tile and cement works	...	...	...	10
Cider making works	...	...	...	1
Saw mills	...	...	...	7
Corn mills	...	...	...	3
Rubber works	...	...	...	1
Condensed milk factory	...	...	...	1

Workshops and Workplaces.

Number of workshops and workplaces in the district	...	...	...	113
Bakehouses	...	...	...	25
Wicker and basket works	...	...	...	15
Gasworks (acetylene)	...	...	...	1
Tailors	...	...	...	2
Dressmakers	...	...	...	1
Motor works and garages	...	...	...	9
Blacksmiths	...	...	...	23
Carpenters and wheelwrights	...	...	...	16
Builders	...	...	...	9
Saddlers	...	...	...	3
Boot and shoe repairers	...	...	...	5
Various	...	...	...	4

Outworkers.

Lists of outworkers received	...	...	...	1
Number of outworkers	...	...	...	1

Cowsheds and Dairies.

Number of producers on the register	...	...	...	592
„ „ distributors „ „ „	...	...	...	32
Distributors who are also producers	...	...	...	24
„ wholesale traders	...	...	...	2
„ retail purveyors	...	...	...	6
Number of persons granted certificates of registration	...	...	...	40
Cowsheds and dairies inspected	...	...	...	155
Number of notices served	...	...	...	64
Defective floors	..	...	...	28

Defective drainage	...	...	...	47
Approach yards foul	...	...	...	19
Required cleansing	...	...	...	25
Want of light and ventilation	...	...	...	9
Accumulations of manure	...	...	...	18
Swine kept in cowstalls	...	...	...	9

Meat.

Number of slaughterhouses	...	...	...	20
Defective floors	...	...	...	2
Number of notices received P.H. (Meat) Regulations	...	...	...	196
" " " of regular slaughtering	...	...	...	24
" " " occasional slaughtering	...	...	...	172
" " " given under Section 9	...	...	...	3
Inspections made	...	...	...	301
Meat destroyed				
Pigs—Whole carcase	...	...	...	4
Head	...	...	...	5
Internal organs only	...	...	...	3
Oxen and Calves—Whole carcase	...	...	...	3
Fore and hind quarters only	...	...	...	2
Head	...	...	...	6
Internal organs only	...	...	...	29
Sheep—Whole carcase	...	...	...	5
Organs only	...	...	...	26

Other Foods.

Number of bakehouses	...	...	...	25
Notices to limewash	13

Offensive Trades.

Number carried on in district	1
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Water Supply.

Number of samples taken for chemical analysis	6
" " " " " bacteriological analysis	74
" " " returned unsatisfactory	...	...	40

Petroleum Acts.

Number of persons storing petroleum	...	...	35
“ “ “ “ carbide or calcium	...	...	20
Licences granted during the year (petroleum)	...	...	15
“ “ “ “ (carbide)	...	...	6

Your obedient Servant,

W. HORACE COUSINS.

Certified Inspector Royal Sanitary Institute.

Professional Associate of the Surveyor's Institution.

Member of the Municipal and County Engineers.

